

BOOKS FOR ALL TASTES

THE POETIC IMAGE, C. Day Lewis, 13/- posted. Addressed to the non-specialist, this investigation into the nature of poetry is an important contribution to literary criticism.

HOUSES FOR MODERATE MEANS, Randal Phillips, 11/9 posted. Photographs and plans of nearly one hundred selected modern houses with practical details to guide intending house-owners.

READING I'VE LIKED, selected by Clifton Fadiman, 18/3 posted. An 870-page prose anthology drawn from two decades of reading and reviewing, "presented with an informal prologue and various commentaries."

THE MATTERHORN, Guido Rey, 23/3 posted. Mountaineering enthusiasts will welcome this finely-illustrated history of the famous peak, and the record of climbing achievements that it contains.

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RADIO VIEWSREEL

What Our Commentators Say

Those Were the Days

PRE-1914, apparently, according to Harry Davidson and his Orchestra and the BBC, dancing really was dancing; nowadays, according to any swing fan of your acquaintance, you will discover that it is hep, jive, rug-cutting, boogie-woogie—or have I got it all wrong? But the enthusiast of the good-old-days who tries to convince the younger generation that dancing in his day was stately, sober, dignified, is going

to have a hard job. What about the Kitchen Lancers, which young ladies were forbidden to dance because it was "wild and unseemly"? What about the waltz some years earlier, regarded by all except the most progressive as "scandalously improper"? It is certainly a little hard to imagine at the moment, but the time cannot be far off when the most outrageous antics of the jitter-bug artist will provoke comment solely because they are stuffy and old-fashioned. The one point on which I am not yet clear is, does the dancing follow the trend of popular music or do the dancers call the tune? But on second thoughts probably the answer is neither; like Topsy, they both just grew.

The Man of Property

NO mere radio wraiths are the characters in the new 2YD serial *The Man of Property*. For this most of the credit goes, of course, to Galsworthy, who created his Forsytes as solid as the houses they built, and as the good upper-middle-class earth beneath their feet. Once met they are never forgotten, and though we perhaps have no first-hand knowledge of the age and habitat which produced the Forsytes and their milieu, both are disconcertingly real, since the principle they illustrate is always with us. The adapter, Muriel Levy, had therefore in one respect an easy task, since the characters did not need to be "put across"; they spoke, and there they were. However her adaptation is an inspired one. Young Jolyon is a convincing narrator, since he was later perhaps the only one in a position to know what was happening at the beginning. The flash-back technique makes for clarity, and the first episode put listeners in possession of all facts necessary for their comprehending enjoyment, without an effect of overloading. But most of all I feel grateful for the way in which the radio version brings out the epic repetitions of the novel, Jolyon's "He's a man of property" and James's classic plaint "Nobody ever tells me anything."

This Actually Happened

TRUTH, says the philosopher, is at the bottom of a well. Fortunately, or unfortunately, we have among us a goodly number of Little Tommy Stouts, so that every now and then we get a programme such as 2ZB's Sunday night series *This Actually Happened*. Now there are perhaps some of us who think, S.P.C.A. or no S.P.C.A., that the animal was not worth rescuing; that often the cat in question was no mouser but an insignificant stray better left in the well. Mr. Ripley, for example, of *Believe It or Not* fame, has a regrettable habit of rescuing stray kittens of no value to anyone. The cat in the well is not necessarily better than the cat on the doorstep, and an unimportant truth is no more valuable than an insignificant fiction. A significant fiction, on the other hand, comes very near to abstract truth. All of which means that it is my considered opinion that factual truth, in a radio programme intended as entertainment, is largely irrelevant. A recent Sunday's programme consisted of two items. *The Club of Beautiful Men*, and *Luck Came to Pieter Lein*. The first item bored me because, though perhaps true, it was as artistically unsatisfactory as the next-door

(continued on next page)

HOW

*Young
are you?*

See how the smoother,
lighter-textured Three
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